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The sale of sensory commodities, or commodities that gain their desirability through their excitement of our senses, is nothing new. Indeed, spectacle and amazement, delivered through our sensory receptors, have long been relevant qualities for the desirability of commodities. Modernity, nonetheless, has brought something new to these sensory commodities: an ease of reproducibility that would have previously been impossible. In this paper, I engage with a double meaning of "sense:" first, as the sensory, or the experiences of phenomena as communicated through our sensory organs; second, as meaning-sense, or the sense of something as the attribution of a certain quality and interpretation. Analyzing the case study of the Dubai Global Village (DGV), I showcase how a *sensory* construction creates a specific *sense* of cosmopolitanism.

DGV claims to be one of the world's largest tourism, leisure, and entertainment projects as well as the first cultural shopping destination in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.[1] Within it, visitors are greeted by an amalgamation of commercial outlets, event locations, restaurants, and carnival rides. At the heart of DGV lie its (inter-)national pavilions,[2] 27 buildings supposedly representing different world cultures.[3] These pavilions claim to offer "unique and

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[1] Dubai Global Village, "About Us."

[2] DGV itself switches between calling the pavilions "national" and "international." For the purposes of this paper, I will call them "national pavilions" to emphasize the monolithic nature of presentation within them.

[3] Dubai Global Village, "Pavilions & Selfie Spots."

authentic experiences" in the form of cultural goods, foods, and events.[4] Each pavilion, adorned with exterior signage specifying the national culture or group of cultures it supposedly represents, is constructed and decorated to remind visitors of those cultures. The pavilion system and its methods of presentation have been compared to the national pavilions of nineteenth-century world's fairs.[5] With DGV's offerings representing sensory stimuli, the aforementioned importance of spectacle and amazement for the desirability of commodities becomes apparent.

DGV's engagement with representations of world cultures is emblematic of Dubai's reimagining of the global and its place within it. Dubai has risen to be a bustling hub of commerce and luxury by investing oil revenue into a petro-fueled service and tourism economy,[6] helping fulfill desires to be an attractive location for businesses and tourists alike, a "global city of superlatives."[7] Following Saskia Sassen's seminal work on cities in a globalized world, we can describe a global city as a complex hub within the international network characterized by international finance, business, and communication, as well as a high level of cultural diversity and cosmopolitanism.[8] The Dubai government proudly embraces the economic axes of this definition, but it keeps silent about the cultural and cosmopolitan axes except to present Dubai as a space for intercultural encounters.[9]

Scholars have problematized the sense of cosmopolitanism propagated in Dubai and the Gulf due to its restrictive political context. For example, Helene Thiollet and Laure Assaf have claimed that cities in the Gulf showcase a paradox of cosmopolitanism, exhibiting both highly diverse populations and exclusionary politics restricting the freedom of these populations.[10]

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[4] Dubai Global Village, "About Us."
[5] O'Connor, "Spectacular Memory," 214.
[6] Haider, "The Growing Pains," 1063–4.
[7] Stephenson, "Tourism, Development and 'Destination Dubai'," 728.
[8] "The Global City," 38–40.
[9] Pagès-El Karoui, "Ambivalent Cosmopolitanism," 171–2.
[10] "Cosmopolitanism," 2.

Matthew Gray argues that such state-mediated cosmopolitan appearances are best described as "pseudocosmopolitan."[11]

Gray's critique of pseudocosmopolitanism focuses on the incorporation of perceived cosmopolitan virtues into national identity. This paper builds onto this critique by analyzing the object subjects engage with to achieve this desired image. Through an analysis of DGV, I argue that the creation of pseudocosmopolitan spaces in Dubai also involves the creation of specific objects with which subjects can engage. I will characterize this creation by invoking the Baudrillardian concepts of the simulacrum (i.e., a copy without an original) and hyperreality (i.e., the inability to differentiate between reality and fiction). To do this, I will first describe the desire to be a global city and the counterpoint of cosmopolitanisms in the Gulf. Subsequently, I will showcase DGV's construction as a pseudocosmopolitan space. Finally, building on the existing concept of pseudocosmopolitanism, I will characterize the objects of engagement in DGV as simulacra and DGV itself as a space of hyperreality.

Global Cities and Cosmopolitanism in the Gulf

Before engaging with DGV itself, it is necessary to take two preliminary steps: first, to identify the reasons that being a "global city" is desirable and understand the role of cosmopolitanism in becoming such a city; second, to clarify the "fuzzy" concept of cosmopolitanism and the state of cosmopolitanism in the contemporary Gulf.

As mentioned, Sassen refers to global cities as those that sit at the intersections of global flows of money, people, and knowledge. In this, global cities constitute spaces in which the conceptual dichotomy between "global" and "local" is breached, exhibiting the conditions of globality in a local setting.[12] This situation means that global cities occupy the top positions in an international urban hierarchy. Through their entanglement with production, consumption, investment, migration, decision-making, and other "globalized" flows, global cities can "'fold' global space and time to

[11] "Heritage, Public Space, and Cosmopolitanism," 5.
[12] Sassen, "The Global City," 32.

their advantage."[13] It is important to note, however, that Sassen introduced the term "global city" not as a descriptor but as a critical concept to analyze and evaluate global divisions of labor, center-periphery distinctions, as well as urban segregation and segmentation resulting from growing globalization. The critical literature on global cities has largely followed this conceptual focus, garnering criticism for its portrayal of the city as a passive actor, a "plaything" of globalization controlled by structural forces.[14] Almost ironically, then, the idea of the global city as a seat of power and influence has been taken up by state and local authorities as an object of desire, leading cities to implement policies seeking to establish themselves as global cities.[15] As cultural geographer Doreen Massey has noted, "going global has become a universal urban imperative."[16]

What, then, is the role of cosmopolitanism in following this urban imperative? Since the *raison d'être* of the global city extends beyond mere economics, a sense of cosmopolitanism is one of its foundational elements.[17] The sense of cosmopolitanism in a global city derives not just from diversity but also from citizens' ability and willingness to engage with those perceived to be outside of their own cultures. The portrayal of citizens as capable of such intercultural encounters is thus integral to creating the perception of a global city.[18] A city needs to appear cosmopolitan, consequently, to fulfill the "urban imperative" that it become a global city. Dubai's desire to position itself as a global city of superlatives thus necessitates a presentation of its citizens as cosmopolitan subjects. To fully understand this process, the term "cosmopolitanism" needs to be defined further and placed in the context of the Gulf.

Due to the term's ambiguity, I want to start with a negative definition of the sense in which I will use "cosmopolitanism" here. I will not be talking about so-called descriptive cosmopolitanism, in which "cosmopolitanism" is often used interchangeably with the

[13] Warf, "Global Cities," 929.
[14] Ljungkvist, *The Global City 2.0*, 19.
[15] *Id.*, 20.
[16] *World City*, 12.
[17] Warf, "Global Cities," 930.
[18] Cheah, "Cosmopolitanism," 492.

equally ambiguous term "diversity." The interchangeable usage and confusion of descriptive and normative meanings of "cosmopolitanism" leads to what Pnina Werbner called the "dialectics of cosmopolitanism" in contemporary urban environments, where cosmopolitanism is both a descriptor and an object of debate.[19] Furthermore, I will not be engaging with debates about cosmopolitanism in political philosophy and ethics, where the question is whether we owe special obligations to compatriots and members of our communities as compared to others.[20] The conceptualization of cosmopolitanism I will discuss rests upon those debates, but engagement with their particularities is beyond the scope of this paper.

Instead, starting with its etymological roots, I want to define cosmopolitanism, fittingly deriving from ancient Greek *cosmos* ("world") and *polis* ("city"), as the belief in a single, worldwide community of which all human beings are members.[21] The relevant elements of "community," a term with its own conceptual history and debate, which also unfortunately is beyond the scope of this paper, are shared values and common enterprises.[22] It may thus be more accurate to describe all human beings as potential members of this worldwide community once they move beyond the recognition of only their local communities and embrace cosmopolitanism. In his conceptualization of cosmopolitanism and locality, Ulf Hannerz has described the praxis resulting from this definition of cosmopolitanism as a mode of being characterized by an aesthetic openness to the other combined with the mastery of evaluating differences and incorporating desirable specificities.[23] Notably, however, for Hannerz this engagement does not result in specific ethical commitments.[24] Other authors, like Martha Nussbaum, have argued that recognizing such a community entails the recognition of similar structures of obligation to both those who

[19] "Cosmopolitanism," 309.
[20] See e.g. Brock and Brighthouse, *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism.*
[21] Cheah, "Cosmopolitanism," 487.
[22] Bradshaw, "The Post-Place Community," 10.
[23] "Cosmopolitans and Locals," 240.
[24] *Id.*, 237.

are far away and to those who are near.[25] Local duties of recognition and obligation thus need to be externalized to a universal level.[26] Indeed, contemporary discourse on cosmopolitanism often positions it as the universalist opposite of localism and nationalism, which build upon particularistic theories of identity. However, the embeddedness of contemporary cosmopolitanism in national (i.e., particularistic) contexts calls this position into question.[27] Arising from this contrast of ambiguous definitions and stemming from the interest of appearing cosmopolitan which I laid out earlier is the concept of the contemporary cosmopolitan subject, who has internalized the ideals of cosmopolitanism, "believes" in the global, but locally acts according to these ideals only in relevant and strategic contexts.[28] Cities attempting to present themselves as "global cities" desire populations comprised of such contemporary cosmopolitan subjects.

The specific context of the Gulf, and Dubai in particular, reveals further tensions of this sense of cosmopolitanism in subjects and the mechanisms through which it is fostered. Historiographical research into cosmopolitanism in the Gulf is multiple and controversial, often being met by criticisms that cosmopolitanism was introduced through Ottoman and British colonial rule and thus carries with it a distinct colonialist sense.[29] However, especially in, but not limited to, trade centers and places of pilgrimage, another form of cosmopolitanism was also found, resulting from encounters with travelers and merchants and determined by diverse and changing populations.[30] Thus, stemming from these two historical senses of cosmopolitanism, contemporary senses of the term have specific characteristics. In his account of studies of cosmopolitanism in the Middle East, Will Hanley identifies three such characteristics: a focus on elite cosmopolitanism, a mainly descriptive instead of

[25] "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," 12–3.
[26] Warf, "Global Cities," 931.
[27] Calhoun, "Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism," 433.
[28] Mitchell, "Educating the National Citizen," 388.
[29] Thiollet and Assaf, "Cosmopolitanism," 2.
[30] Iqtidar, "Muslim cosmopolitanism," 627–8.

normative usage of the term "cosmopolitan," and a tone of grieving nostalgia for an imagined cosmopolitan past.[31]

These characteristics, combined with the aforementioned conceptual plurality of cosmopolitanisms, lead to severe conceptual tensions. To analyze the dynamic of these tensions from which the specific sense of cosmopolitanism in Dubai arises, I shall focus on two specific tensions: first, the tension between the desired cosmopolitanism of Dubai's elites and undesired cosmopolitanism of its margins; second, the tension between the universalist conceptual groundwork of cosmopolitanism per se and Dubai's exclusionary and restrictive political context.

As we have seen, cosmopolitanism in the Gulf context has generally focused on elites, in which highly skilled expats and the Dubaian elite gain their cosmopolitan capital through their ability to "master" intercultural encounters.[32] Opposed to this elite sense of cosmopolitanism is the cosmopolitanism of border-crossing workers and migrants, whose recognition of a global community does not arise from free choice but from displacement and economic necessity. To speak with Ulrich Beck, this sense of cosmopolitanism has become the standard for vast swaths of the global population.[33] This sense may be called vernacular cosmopolitanism. It is a cosmopolitanism of the margin, resulting in its oxymoronic nomenclature combining the locality of vernacularity with the universality of cosmopolitanism.[34] Invocations of cosmopolitanism in Dubai emerge into this tension between two senses of cosmopolitanism. We can identify further tensions by situating the senses of cosmopolitanism in relation to their political context in Dubai.

In the politically exclusionary context of Dubai, the subjects exemplifying the sense of vernacular cosmopolitanism are further marginalized and suppressed. Their position on the margins of society is solidified through exclusionary and segregationist politics,

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[31] Hanley, "Grieving Cosmopolitanism," 1358.
[32] Koning, *Global Dreams,* xvi.
[33] Beck, *Cosmopolitan Vision,* 103-105.
[34] Werbner, "Vernacular Cosmopolitanism," 496–8.

and they are physically pushed out to the city's peripheries.[35] The visibility of vernacular cosmopolitan subjects in public space is mainly possible through the utilization of abandoned spaces, while their presence in the spotlight is policed and inhibited.[36] From this results a paradox: The vernacular cosmopolitan subjects are engaged in the construction of Dubai's many attractions which allow its presentation as a global city. To achieve this image, Dubai's elites present themselves as cosmopolitan subjects utilizing spaces built by those on the margins whilst their vernacular cosmopolitanism is pushed further out. From this results a simultaneity of difference seemingly incompatible with cosmopolitanism's universality.[37] Consequently, the sense of cosmopolitanism present in the Gulf is an instrumental one, a cosmopolitanism of elites whose higher social positions are allocated to them based on the mastery of intercultural encounters only made possible by those on the margins.[38]

A threat to the exclusionary regime arises, however, from the imperative that elite subjects become cosmopolitan subjects in service of the recognition as a global city. Fuyuki Kurasawa points out an emancipatory potential of critical reflections on cosmopolitanism arising from discovering overlapping consensus and the fusion of horizons.[39] Here, recognizing cosmopolitanisms universalism and using it to criticize existing conceptions of the term in state policy can lead to the recognition of injustices through the identification with those on the margins. This recognition, according to Kurasawa, could lead to challenges for neoliberal economy, state violence, and fundamentalism.[40] As a result, Dubai seeks to control these "intercultural encounters" in such a way that it functions solely to reinforce a city's perception as a global city. Thus, from the interaction amongst the desired sense of elite cosmopolitanism, the hiding of vernacular cosmopolitanism, and the exclusionary political context of the Gulf, the sense of cosmopolitanism arises that

[35] Kothari, "Migrant Cosmopolitans," 513.
[36] Sassen, "Does the City Have Speech?," 218.
[37] Bhabha, "Vernacular Cosmopolitans," 141.
[38] Thiollet and Assaf, "Cosmopolitanism," 3.
[39] "Critical Cosmopolitanism," 286.
[40] "Global Justice," 98–100.

Matthew Gray has termed "pseudocosmopolitanism." According to Gray, pseudocosmopolitanism

> is driven not by a profound humanist impulse nor a genuine attempt to transcend national identities, but rather uses state-created places and spaces with supposedly-cosmopolitan values and narratives to serve and strengthen national identity and loyalty to national-level institutions.[41]

Pseudocosmopolitanism is the desired form of cosmopolitanism in the Gulf, a cosmopolitanism that simultaneously portrays citizens as cosmopolitan subjects whilst mitigating potential threats to the exclusionary political context in which it takes place by controlling and mediating spaces and narratives through the state. It thus enables the portrayal of cities in the Gulf as global cities without engaging with the vernacular cosmopolitanism of large parts of their population and the emancipatory potential of critical cosmopolitanism.

Dubai Global Village as a Pseudocosmopolitan Space

Having thus shown the dynamic of cosmopolitanisms present in Dubai and the specific sense of pseudocosmopolitanism arising from it, I now want to show how we can understand DGV as a pseudocosmopolitan space. For this, I will engage with the three parts of Gray's conception separately.

To show the state-created nature of DGV, we need to analyze its history and current ownership structure. DGV started in 1997 as a collection of kiosk stalls on the side of Dubai Creek and, after short stays at the district of Oud Metha and Dubai Festival City, found its present location just outside Dubai along the Shaikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Road in 2005.[42] In its current form, DGV is operated by Arab Media Group, an entertainment company specializing in "broadcasting, event management, and family

[41] "Heritage, Public Space, and Cosmopolitanism," 5.
[42] Zaki, "Dubai's Global Village."

entertainment."[43] Arab Media Group, for its part, is owned by the holding company Dubai Holding, which lists DGV in its entertainment portfolio.[44] Finally, Dubai Holding is owned 99.67% by Dubai's ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum and can be regarded as his personal investment, exemplifying an overlap between local government and business that has led some to call the city Dubai Inc.[45] In the history of DGV, we see the continued role of Dubai's government and ruler in the creation, ownership, operation, and continuous re-creation of DGV, allowing us to see DGV as a "state-created space."

What, then, are the values exemplified within this space? If we examine DGV's "mission statement," we can find the claim that:

> [w]ith a strong belief that the world's diversity and creativity is a limitless source of excitement and that human connection should have no boundaries, Global Village brings together extraordinary people to create a More Wonderful World [sic] for guests from around the globe.[46]

Here, we can see several of the aforementioned senses of cosmopolitanism existing in the Dubaian context surface. The invocation of "human connection without boundaries" reflects the cosmopolitan view that humanity is a global community, but the characterization of that community as being primarily a "source of excitement" again shows the elite connotations of that sense of cosmopolitanism. Vernacular forms of cosmopolitanism are absent. Recognizing the profit imperative under which DGV operates, it seems necessary for DGV to hide the forms of cosmopolitanism present in Dubai and a globalized world that do not lead to commodifiable and sellable excitement and wonder. Further elite connotations can be found in the portrayal of a cosmopolitan project as being driven by "extraordinary people," showcasing the

[43] Arab Media Group, "About Us."
[44] Dubai Holding, "Dubai Holding Entertainment."
[45] Thompson, "Dubai," 162.
[46] Dubai Global Village, "About Us."

importance of being cosmopolitan in the attainment of extraordinary status and high social positions. The cosmopolitan values portrayed in the "mission statement" thus reflect the conceptual tensions within the Gulf, allowing us to characterize them as, in Gray's words, "supposedly-cosmopolitan."

Finally, connecting these findings about DGV and its values with the aforementioned strategic importance of appearing cosmopolitan, we can see the state's interest in DGV's continued existence. The space simultaneously fosters ideas about what it means to be a cosmopolitan subject and supports a conceptualization of the *global* centered around Dubai so that visitors flock to the city to experience the cultures of the world. This dynamic, in addition to the economic benefits of the space, points towards the role of DGV as a sensory wonderland and a space for public education that produces and shapes ideal cosmopolitan subjects.[47] Thus, the space has a clear role in strengthening what Gray calls "national identity and loyalty."

Simulacra and Hyperreality in Dubai Global Village

DGV can be described as a pseudocosmopolitan space characterized by state control and mediation. However, I want to expand on this state-mediation by proposing that not only the space and the act of engagement are mediated but also the object that is being engaged with. Examining the "cultures"[48] presented for the intercultural encounter that shapes the pseudocosmopolitan subject, I will show that they are simulacra, copies without an original, that reveal the hyperreal constructions foundational to DGV.

Hyperreality is a concept in the analysis of postmodernity that describes something appearing to be real whilst not being real. Hyperrealities are based on the imitation of reality, disguising the differences between original and copy and breaking down the distinction between reality and fiction.[49] However, we need to

[47] Biln, "On the Fabrication of Cultural Memory," 28.

[48] I will be using the ambiguous term "culture" to refer to the object of engagement without further clarifying its definition. I recognize potential problems of essentialization, but hold that since I will be critiquing such essentializations in DGV, the usage of the term is merited.

[49] Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange*, 71–2.

recognize here that hyperreality is not a matter of epistemology—the subject does not, for instance, simply lack the capacity to differentiate between reality and fiction—but ontology. The hyperreal construct is in its being unclassifiable as reality or fiction.[50] According to cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard, hyperrealities show themselves through simulacra, copies without an original, which can be best understood through the language of semiotics. In semiotics, the study of signs, every sign (e.g., images, words, etc.) is made up of a signifier and a signified. While the signified denotes the underlying concept, the signifier is used to allude to this concept, thus constituting our communication. We can distinguish three orders of simulacra. First-order simulacra are based on imitations; they are counterfeits of the signifiers of an original. Second-order simulacra are based not on imitation, but exact reproduction, enabled through the large-scale reproduction capacities stemming from modernity. Third-order simulacra, then, are neither based on imitation nor reproduction, but are creations in their own right. Through the eclectic combination of signifiers, they create signs which are only self-referential, not referring anymore to a specific signified. Thus, the simulacrum precedes reality, the original cannot be located, and the distinction between reality and fiction breaks down.[51] Through the simulacra, hyperreality can be engaged with like reality but carries with it an uncanniness resulting from the aforementioned indistinguishability.

I argue that the "cultures" presented in DGV are such third-order simulacra. To demonstrate this, I will evaluate the presentation of these cultures through the sensorial in two pavilions of DGV, the Indian pavilion and the Japanese pavilion.[52] Presentations and processes similar to those I describe here also happen in other pavilions, but for lack of space, I will focus on the two. My analysis will focus on three dimensions of the pavilions: architecture, offered commodities, and presented spectacles.

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[50] Trifonova, "Is There a Subject in Hyperreality?"

[51] Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange*, 50.

[52] Following the Indian government's international tourism campaign, the pavilion is officially called the "Incredible India pavilion." For the sake of clarity, however, I will call it the Indian pavilion.

Figure 1: Outside View of the Indian Pavilion.[52]

I start by examining the Indian pavilion, beginning with its architecture. From the outside, the Indian pavilion exhibits a combination of different architectural styles present on the Indian subcontinent (fig. 1). The archways, wall carvings, and domes all resemble parts of architecture on the Indian subcontinent, but they are combined without showcasing an awareness of the differences between Bengali, Rajput, Mughal, and other types of architecture.[54] In this, they are signifiers lifted from their context and eclectically combined throughout the pavilion. Their sensory experience for visitors, however, happens in their totality, leading to the signification of a single signified of "Indian-ness."

When we move to the inside of the pavilion, we see further evidence of this process (fig. 2). Multiple bright colors frame the sale of a multitude of cultural and sensory commodities like jewelry, tea, and spices.[55] Again, individual commodities are lifted from their context, only chosen for their supposed representational value or sensational capacity. In her study of the role of color in Western depictions of India, Jagjeet Lally argued that India has been an object of desire for chromophile fantasies, juxtaposed to the

[53] Dubai Global Village, "Incredible India."
[54] Bahga and Raheja, "Postcolonial Indian Architecture," 475.
[55] Dubai Global Village, "Incredible India."

Figure 2: Inside View of the Indian Pavilion.[56]

greyness and mundaneness of everyday life.[57] This is reflected in the sensory amalgamation offered within. Further, the focus on certain cultural commodities, especially spices, not only expands the sensory excitement beyond the visual but also reflects India's standing within the global sphere during and before the age of colonialism.[58] Despite this eclecticism, these signifiers again point to a single signified of "Indian-ness" through the totality of their sensory experience.

Moving to the Japanese pavilion, we see similar processes at play. The outside of the Japanese pavilion is almost caricature-like, with visitors entering through the fan of a *geisha* flanked by statues of two *samurai* with walls reminiscent of *shoji* (i.e., paper walls) painted in the style of traditional Japanese paintings (fig. 3). The eclectic choice here seems even more based on the recognizability of the signifiers through the sensory experience. The individual signifiers may exist in reality but are again taken from their context and combined in such a way that they point towards a specific signified of "Japanese-ness."

[56] Dubai Global Village, "Incredible India."
[57] Lally, "Colour as Commodity."
[58] Morton, *The Poetics of Spice*, 20.

Figure 3: Outside View of the Japanese Pavilion.[59]

This continues in the events held at the Japanese pavilion. The so-called "Japan Show" claims to showcase "Japanese culture through their popular fan and parasol dances."[60] The stage of the Japan Show is adorned with blooming cherry trees and pagodas, and dancers in kimonos move to music played on traditional Japanese instruments (fig. 4). While fan dances are also an existing practice, the lifting from the cultural context shows itself even more strongly here. This deterritorialization, combined with the presentation of other signifiers on stage, creates a sensory experience based on vision and audio that, again, signifies a single certain signified.

The cultures presented in DGV, if we recognize the space's role as a cultural *shopping* center, follow a logic of commodification based on their recognizability. The cultural commodities are fixations and essentializations of a fluid culture in order for them to be subjected to the commodity logic of a cultural shopping center.[61] Furthermore, those parts of the culture that cannot be transformed into sensory commodities, as well as those parts that lack recognizability, are not represented in DGV's portrayal. The

[59] Dubai Global Village, "Japan."
[60] Dubai Global Village, "Japan Show."
[61] Pocock, "Authenticity," 4.

Figure 4: Fan Dances as Part of the "Japan Show."[62]

eclecticism of combined signifiers shows a certain arbitrariness but still is done along the terms of recognizability. Individual signifiers are taken from reality, lifted from their context and permutated in such a way that their totality signifies a single signified, the hyperreal culture that shares its name with a geographical region of reality.

The signifiers serve the construction of a certain sense of culture; they are chosen for their ability to signify "Indian-ness" or "Japanese-ness."[63] Such cultures do not really exist in the sense in which they are portrayed in DGV but play into pre-held convictions about these cultures already held by visitors. As such, visitors can engage with these cultures in the same way that they could with a real culture but are supposedly still aware of their position within DGV's commodified logic. From this, the uncanniness of the hyperreal culture emerges; the "Indian culture" of DGV, for instance, becomes indistinguishable in its capacity for engagement from any cultural practice in India.

The pavilions are thus representative of a deliberate construction of culture that lies at the bottom of DGV. These cultures are only constituted of the cultural parts, the signifiers, which are included within them and serve as self-referential points. The totality of eclectic signifiers we can find in the above-described

[62] Dubai Global Village, "Japan."
[63] O'Connor, "Spectacular Memory," 219.

national pavilions thus only signifies this exact totality. The physical construction of the pavilion and its filling with commodities thus parallels the construction of such a hyperreal culture, a representation of a representation without an original.

The simulacrum of culture is then presented as the object of intercultural encounters, and it is able to fill this role through its hyperreality. Visitors, unable to distinguish reality from fiction, are served this simulacrum of culture and engage with it as if it were real. It is here that the connection between the sensory and the meaning-sense surfaces. Visitors engage with the sensory commodities laid out before them, seemingly engaged in an encounter with a different "culture." From this perceived engagement, they draw their sense of elite cosmopolitanism—their identity as cosmopolitan subjects—which is desired by Dubai to portray itself as a global city.

A bitter irony accompanies the constructions of simulacra in DGV when viewed with the tension of vernacular cosmopolitanism in mind. The space in which the act of marginalization takes place, where the elite is able to portray themselves as cosmopolitan subjects, despite the pseudocosmopolitan nature of the encounter, is dependent on the construction of hyperreal cultures that share their names with many of the points of origin of those that exhibit vernacular cosmopolitanism. The emancipatory capacity of critical reflections on the cosmopolitanism imperative presented in DGV is minimized for state-sanctioned cosmopolitan subjects through the hyperreal cultures with which they engage. As a commercial space, DGV fosters the desired sense of elite cosmopolitanism whilst simultaneously supporting the exclusionary political contexts of Dubai.

This minimization, at the heart of the construction of DGV, serves the sense of pseudocosmopolitanism. Not only the space and the action, but also the object of the intercultural encounter is constructed and mediated by the state. It is thus an attempt to overcome the dilemma of the global city in exclusionary contexts, with the simulacra of cultures and the hyperreality of the object to be engaged with further expanding the control of the state's authority. Returning to cosmopolitanism's emancipatory potential, even if visitors feel like they are merging horizons and finding consensus with the object of their encounter, these are only found

with the hyperreal culture that plays into already pre-held convictions. Furthermore, the narrowness of the hyperreal culture only allows largely inconsequential mergers, like the recognition of the appeal of a certain commodity, which have little emancipatory potential and are solely determined by the desires and wishes of the visitor. In the end, the visitor as a pseudocosmopolitan subject only relates to themselves, and the danger for the state's authority is overcome.

Conclusion

Dubai's meteoric rise on the global stage was dependent on and created further imperatives to portray itself as a global city. The cosmopolitan imperatives associated with this portrayal, however, would lead to undesirable side effects, threatening the exclusionary politics of the Gulf states. Consequently, the approach of pseudocosmopolitanism enabled cities like Dubai to create spaces in which their pseudocosmopolitan subjects can be fostered without undesirable side effects. Pseudocosmopolitanism thus remains an important concept for analyzing cosmopolitan imperatives in the context of the Gulf. However, as I have shown, beyond the space and the action, the object encountered in the pseudocosmopolitan space also needs to be recognized as state-controlled and constructed. The analysis I presented here only engaged with a single space and the sensory commodities it offers. Further research into the presence of this sense of pseudocosmopolitanism and its connection to the hyperreal could yield important results for understanding the dynamics of cosmopolitanism in our contemporary times, especially in the context of the Gulf.

The present study has shown the importance of analyzing the connection between the sensory and meaning-sense, especially in matters of constructed sensory experiences. Such constructions should be recognized to fall within fields of tension and power, serving certain meaning-senses whilst also deriving from them. The space of DGV is a prime example of this, being derived from the historical tensions of cosmopolitanism in the Gulf while also playing into the specific sense of pseudocosmopolitanism. As such, the sensory and meaning-sense are caught in a circle, influencing each other as well as being influenced within and by their contexts.

Analyses of these connections and their contexts may show possibilities for critical engagement with the concept of cosmopolitanism in Dubai and the Gulf in order to kindle the emancipatory potential within. Projects like the one carried out in this paper are, however, only the first step. In contexts were a certain meaning-sense is desired for reasons of power, like the sense of cosmopolitanism in Dubai which only serves its position as a global city, further research and analysis may bring senses of vernacular cosmopolitanism into the spotlight. Through this, the structural contexts pushing the vernacular cosmopolitan subject to the margins may be better described and the projects determining this push critiqued. The ideals of cosmopolitanism hold in them such a potential, but the usage of the term and the different sense of its meaning need to be understood in order to free it.

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